

Music and meaning in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*. The inset tales in their performative settings

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Abstract:

This essay argues that in Longus' novel music is an interface between myth and social reality. It discusses the relationship between music, which is semantically open and variable, and the meanings that are attributed to musical sounds through myths, as well as the social meaning of musical performance.

Résumé:

Cet article soutient que dans le roman de Longus, la musique est un lien entre le mythe et la réalité sociale. L'article examine la relation entre la musique—indéfinie et variable—et le sens qui lui est attribué à travers les mythes, ainsi que la signification sociale de la performance musicale.

Music occupies a central place in Longus' novel *Daphnis and Chloe*. The pastoral setting that forms the backdrop of the love story between the two adolescent protagonists lends itself to the depiction of a variety of musical scenes. We witness shepherds singing and piping, both to entertain themselves and to guide their animals, as well as the tunes produced by birds, the chirping of crickets and cicadas, and the sounds of rivers, the wind, and the echo. Throughout the novel, musical sounds interact closely with other forms of expression, in particular storytelling and dance. Their interdependence is showcased most clearly in a festival in honour of Pan towards the end of Book 2, which brings together a tale, musical performance, and dancing. Each of these dimensions contributes in its own way to the production and establishment of meaning among those who celebrate the festival. The role of music in this process will be the main subject of this essay.

In a recent contribution, Silvia Montiglio showed that in Longus' novel music is both an

expression of harmony and a practice that helps to create a social order.¹ The present enquiry focuses more narrowly on the interplay between the beauty and boundless variability of musical sounds and the production of specific meanings through words and stories. In particular, it argues that music serves to integrate mythical values and role patterns into social reality. In Longus' novel, the song of a bird and the sounds of the echo are taken to proclaim stories that are highly relevant to those who listen to them, and virtuoso musical performance integrates the role models shaped by a myth and reenacted in a dance into the world inhabited by the musician and the audience. Either way, music acts as a link between the world of myth and the lived environment.

The role of music in mapping myth onto society comes to the fore most explicitly in a threefold series of episodes in which music, myth and different types of performance are tightly intertwined. The complex festival scene mentioned above is the centre piece of this series, which in turn sheds light on the interpretation of the novel as a whole. All three episodes are dominated by an inset tale. These tales invariably depict a musically gifted female and a male competitor or suitor, who overpowers the female and presses her into submission. They all end with the destruction of the female and her transformation into a musical phenomenon—a singing bird in the first tale, the syrinx in the second, and the echo in the third. The metamorphoses are characterised by growing violence, responding first to a prayer of the female protagonist, then occurring upon her flight into the marshes, and finally resulting from her dismemberment by maddened herdsmen. Pan is the male protagonist of the second and the third tales, and in the first one Pan and Pitys are given as the subject of a song sung by the female protagonist, so that here

¹ Montiglio 2012; cf. Liviabella Furiani 1984; Maritz 1991; Bernardi 1992; Amado 1998. See also below, n. *28.

too the god's unrelenting and cruel pursuit of females is indirectly present.²

The violence of the tales jars with the main plot, which traces the reciprocal love of a boy and a girl and their path towards a happy end, their wedding. Scholars have variously tried to explain the violence as foreshadowing Chloe's loss of virginity, or at least as resonating with the way this loss is described by one character, Lykainion, or else as establishing "a clear gulf between the human desires of Daphnis and Chloe and the selfassertive lust of the god Pan."³ The last mentioned approach, which emphasises the contrast rather than the parallelism of inset tales and main plot, has generally been favoured.⁴ But more recently Montiglio, expanding on a seminal contribution by Winkler, traced the repression that accompanies Chloe's path towards marriage, which gradually silences her musical activities and thereby contributes to establishing a patriarchal social order.⁵ The inherent violence of this cultural repression, amplified and highlighted by the inset tales, is glossed over in accounts that fail to distinguish between cultural patterns and anthropological truths.⁶

While the cruelty of the inset tales continues to puzzle, it is generally accepted that the

² In a fuller version of this myth (*Geoponica* 11.10) Pitys is loved by Pan, killed by his rival Boreas and transformed into a pine tree. Pitys is aligned with Syrix and Echo in Theocritus' *Syrinx* and in Nonnus, *Dionysiaka* 2.118-119; see Gow 1950: 2, 554-555; Merkelbach 1988: 34 n. 23; on the three myths together, Borgeaud 1979: 123-130.

³ See Hunter 1983: 54, MacQueen 1990: 79, and Bowie 2003: 370, respectively. On Lykainion see below, at n. 26*.

⁴ See Pandiri 1985: 131-132; Bretzigheimer 1988: 536 n. 52; Konstan 1994: 83 ("the vignettes of aggressive passion are each time undercut or recontained by the gentle reciprocity of Daphnis's and Chloe's love"); Goldhill 1995: 32; Epstein 2002: 33-38; Bowie 2003: 370-72.

⁵ See Montiglio 2012; Winkler 1990. The latter argues that the novel's depiction of cruelty exposes the cultural assumption that male sexuality is naturally violent. His view was criticised on the grounds that in antiquity the depiction of violence against women was widely accepted and would hardly have raised eyebrows (Goldhill 1995: 30-45); that there is no conceivable link between the novel's depictions of male violence and Daphnis' actual behaviour (Bowie 2003: 374-375), and that each episode of violence gives way to beauty and order (Montiglio 2012: 152; Lalanne 2006: 144, who nevertheless notes a dissonance in the novel's depiction of how society passes off its constraints as natural). Montiglio 2012 parts company with Winkler 1990 in arguing that the novel does not criticise but endorses the patriarchal society it depicts. In favour of Winkler it must be added that he was quite aware of reading the novel "against the grain" and advanced valid arguments for doing so (1990: 126).

⁶ See, e.g., Morgan 1994: 70, and the critique by Bowie 2003: 373, and by Winkler 1990: 122. See also below, n. *21. On the inset tales see further McCulloh 1970: 65-66; Deligiorgis 1974: 2-7; Philippides 1981; Pandiri 1985: 130-132; Konstan 1994: 81-83; Wouters 1994: 146-160; Amado 1998: 289-290; Lalanne 2006: 140-142; Kossaiifi 2012 (on the first tale).

interrelated motifs of sexual desire and musical competition that they address resonate with the rest of the novel. But the question of how exactly the myths interact with the social reality inhabited by Daphnis and Chloe still needs elucidation. As we will see, the performative settings in which two of the three tales are placed betray the protagonists' desire to find out the meaning of musical sounds, i.e. semantically undefined or unknown aural phenomena. Furthermore, all three episodes illustrate the interdependence of musical competence and social agency. These themes are in turn closely mirrored in the novel's leitmotiv of the "names and works of love" that the two youths strive after.⁷ The desire to know drives their search for meaning in what they experience and don't understand, namely their own feelings, and the goal of this search is to act upon these strange feelings. Music helps to shape the ways in which they will be able to do so.

The following discussion examines the three episodes involving embedded tales, proceeding from the shortest to the longest and most complex one. The second part sheds light on the performances—music, storytelling, and dance—that regulate the passage from variable or opaque musical sounds to specific and transparent meanings, meanings that ultimately structure and organise Daphnis and Chloe's world. The essay concludes by arguing that the novel betrays a critical stance towards the seemingly unavoidable processes of cultural formation it depicts.

Music and myth

The love story between Daphnis and Chloe is set to begin when the two adolescents are sent to the country to tend to flocks of sheep and goat. As spring arrives, awakening the land and its animals to fresh vitality and beauty, they are delighted with what they hear and see and start

⁷ 1.15.1; 1.18.2; 1.19.1; 2.8.1; 3.17.2; 4.40.1. The search for knowledge of love points to Plato's *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*; see Hunter 1997. On the Platonic background see also Herrmann 2007; on Aristotle's influence on the philosophical vocabulary of the novel see Bretzigheimer 1988: 524-529.

imitating it, as young people are wont to do: “they, being young and impressionable, imitated what they heard and saw” (< gk > οἶα ἀπαλοὶ καὶ νέοι μιμηταὶ τῶν ἀκουομένων ἐγίνοντο καὶ βλεπομένων < /gk >, 1.9.2). The very first objects of their imitations are the tunes of songbirds and the leaps—or dances—of the lambs (ibid.). Music and dancing are thus portrayed as primeval human activities springing forth spontaneously from the imitation of nature, in line with what Democritus, Aristotle and Lucretius claimed.⁸ Accordingly, there is no clear borderline between natural and human musical sounds.⁹ The affinity of human music with natural sounds and objects is witnessed in many instances. In leisure hours, Chloe weaves a cage for a pet cricket that entertains her with its chatter, while Daphnis cuts reeds and fashions them into a syrinx (1.10.2).¹⁰ Daphnis competes with the equally musical pines, and Chloe pits her voice against those of the nightingales (3.24.2).¹¹ A reversal of this kind of competition is observed when at the beginning of the second spring, Daphnis and Chloe challenge the nightingales to sing by playing the syrinx, an invitation which the birds duly accept (3.12.4).

Music and nature are intertwined also in other ways. After the two adolescents have fallen in love with each other without knowing what happened to them, Daphnis ostensibly teaches Chloe how to play the syrinx—if only to snatch it from her and put it back to his own lips, stealing as it were a kiss from her (1.24.4). The musical instrument thus turns into an object in a love game, just as later on a chirping cicada caught in Chloe’s shirt allows Daphnis to reach into

⁸ Democr. DK 68 B 154; Arist. *Poet.* 4, 1448b 20-21; Lucr. 5.1379-1415. On imitation in Longus see Hunter 1983; 19-20; Zeitlin 1990; Herrmann 2007. The verb for the “leaping” lambs is < gk > σκιρτάω < /gk >, regularly used also for dancing (e.g., 2.29.1; Aristoph. *Plout.* 761). The text quoted is Reeve 1982.

⁹ This is noted by Amado (1998: 288-289), who emphasises the spontaneous character of all music in Longus’ novel; cf. Liviabella Furiani 1984: 28. It will be discussed in forthcoming book by Pauline LeVen, who kindly shared an abstract of the project with me.

¹⁰ The cricket is described as < gk > λάλον < /gk > (“talkative”) at 1.14.4; cf. 1.25.3; the same adjective is used of Daphnis at 1.17.4. The syrinx is rightly called the protagonist of the novel next to Daphnis and Chloe by Vieillefond 1987: CLXVI.

¹¹ See Bowie 2005b: 75-76, whose observations on anthropomorphic vocabulary for nature throughout the novel are also relevant (75-78). On the analogy of the human and natural worlds see also Pattoni 2005: 105-107.

the girl's bosom (1.26.3). Although at this stage, being lovesick, Daphnis has lost interest in piping (1.18.2), music or musical objects continue to be part of his amorous explorations. Similarly, Chloe speculates that Daphnis' beauty is owed to his music, "so that after him she too picked up the syrinx" (1.13.4). These instances suggest a connection between musical competition and sexual desire and, more broadly speaking, between art and nature, which is an overarching theme of the novel.

In antiquity, music is generally recognised as inducing sensations and emotions in the listener. Music is therefore an important educational tool, suited to form character over time. Versions of this view can be found most readily in Plato and Aristotle, but many others, whose works have partly been lost, contributed to this discussion.¹² Longus is one of them. What interests in the present context is that music, thus understood, is also a form of communication. But differently from language, it communicates more exclusively via the physicality of sound, which acts directly upon bodies and affects the non-rational parts of the soul. This is why music holds power not only over human beings—especially "young and impressionable" ones, as we saw—but also over animals and, according to the myth of Orpheus, even trees and material objects like rocks. Its uses in herding and hunting are abundantly attested in ancient sources, and Longus' novel depicts many situations in which animals aptly respond to musical sounds.¹³ Just like human beings, the animals are "trained" (< gk > ἐπεπαίδευντο < /gk >) to follow the voice, the syrinx and the clapping of the hands (1.22.2). In one instance they even play a key role in the

¹² For a quick overview see Halliwell 2002: 159-163; for Plato see most recently Gülgönen 2014; Pelosi 2010; for Aristotle, e.g., Ford 2004.

¹³ See especially 4.14–15 (Daphis' musical goats). For music as a hunting strategy see, e.g., Plutarch, *Table Talk* 7.5.2, 704F, and as a herding tool, *ibid.* 7.8.4, 713AB; by analogy, the "herd-like" part of the soul can be tamed with music (*ibid.*). On animals in *Daphnis and Chloe* see Epstein 2002; Bowie 2005a. For Orpheus' power over trees and rocks see, e.g., Apollodorus, *Bibliothēke* 1.3.2. Unless otherwise stated, translations are mine.

development of the plot thanks to their ability to recognise a familiar tune (1.29).¹⁴

So, music and the natural world are tightly interwoven, and music has quite an ambivalent status in relation to nature and culture. Paradoxically, its grounding in natural processes—both via the physicality of sound and via the supposed spontaneity of imitation—makes it a particularly powerful cultural force. In herding animals, the human voice can act as an alternative to the staff (1.8.2), so that sound replaces a physical object suited to the use of force. But even when it reaches great artistic refinement, music retains a certain physical matter-of-factness that is hard to elude. Sounds, therefore, do not only communicate but act. Sounds have their own agency, and one of the topics of the novel is how to control beautiful sounds or, with a wink to the founding text of speech act theory, “how to do things with sounds.”¹⁵ But at the same time the novel presents music as an ineluctable physical force, and the social mechanisms of appropriation and control remain all but invisible.

The next stage of the adolescents’ mimetic response to the beautiful tunes produced by songbirds comprises also interpretation through words. Chloe, who is two years younger than Daphnis, is as keenly aware of the sounds that surround them as he is but seems less familiar with some of them. When she listens in wonder to the delightful melody of a wood dove (< gk > φάττα < /gk >), she wants “to learn what it means” (< gk > μαθεῖν ὅ τι λέγει < /gk >, 1.27.1). Strikingly, she takes it for granted that the song is not just made up of beautiful sounds but has a meaning, which she desires to know. Daphnis, who is not in the least surprised by her question or the underlying assumption, offers an answer in the form of a story: “he taught it to her by expounding the often repeated sounds” (< gk > διδάσκει αὐτὴν ὁ Δάφνις μυθολογῶν τὰ θρυλούμενα < /gk >). The story is that of a musical girl who lost some of her cows to a boy who

¹⁴ See Bowie 2005a: 78-79; Bowie 2005b: 84.

¹⁵ The allusion is to Austin’s seminal lecture entitled “How to do things with words” (Austin ²1975).

trumped her with his brighter voice and lured the animals away. Struck by grief she prayed to be transformed into a bird and became the wood dove.

The expression *ta thryloumena* has raised questions in this passage. It is usually translated as “common talk” or “a well-known story,” and scholars have therefore assumed that Longus must have drawn on an existing tradition.¹⁶ However, the myth Daphnis narrates is not known from other sources, and the absence of proper names, although not unparalleled in ancient mythology, raises doubts about its status as a myth.¹⁷ Perhaps the expression *ta thryloumena* is used precisely to suggest that Daphnis’ story, though obscure or perhaps even made up on the spot by Daphnis himself, wants to compete with better known myths.¹⁸ But the difficulty disappears altogether if a hitherto overlooked alternative is explored, namely that of taking *ta thryloumena* to refer to the repetitive song of the bird itself. The basic meaning of the verb *thrylein* is “to make a confused noise,” “chatter,” “babble” (LSJ s.v. I), which is perfectly in line with the sounds produced by an animal.

Consequently, *mythologeîn* is not simply “to tell a myth.” Rather, it means “to produce a story that elucidates something”—in this case, the inarticulate sounds of the bird’s song.¹⁹ Such an understanding of *mythologeîn* is presupposed for instance in Socrates’ words in Book 6 of the *Republic*, “the polity which we expound in words” (< gk > πολιτεία ἣν μυθολογοῦμεν λόγῳ < /gk >, 501e), where there is no reference to myth in the immediate context. In Longus, there is at least a certain ambiguity regarding *ta thryloumena* and *mythologeîn*, since the tune itself is part of the presumed mythic tradition regarding the wood dove, given that it “even now proclaims its (or

¹⁶ Morgan 2004: 172.

¹⁷ Bowie 2003: 365-366 Kossaiifi 2012: 582 compares Kore, who in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* receives a name only after encountering a man.

¹⁸ Schönberger 1960: 160-161 Kossaiifi 2012 shows that the tale strongly resonates with existing myths (especially those of Aphrodite, Kore-Persephone, Orpheus) but still assumes that it is “Longus’ own work” (587).

¹⁹ The similarity with the narrator, who in telling the story of Daphnis and Chloe expounds a painting (praef. 3), is noted by Pandiri (1985), 131 and Kossaiifi 2012: 588.

her) calamity by singing” (< gk > ἔτι νῦν ἄδουσα μὴνύει τὴν συμφορὰν < /gk >, 1.27.4).

Although ostensibly the bird produces just a pleasant, monotonous tune, it also tells a story, at least for those who claim to know it and proceed to repeat it. Both < gk > μὴνύει < /gk >, which means “to disclose what is secret” (LSJ s.v. A), and the verb that earlier describes the bird’s utterance, *phthengxamene* (1.27.1), are particularly suitable to drive home this point. Though the latter is also regularly applied to animals, it is used especially of the human voice and means “to speak loud and clear” (LSJ s.v. A). Moreover, the word for the bird’s song is *boukolikon* (1.27.1), which certainly evokes not only a rustic tune but also bucolic poetry. All these elements tend to describe the tune as an articulate and meaningful utterance.

There are clear parallels between the girl of the inset tale and Chloe which suggest that the tale has some relevance for the latter. Among them is the juxtaposition of *parthenos*, *parthene*, i.e., “maiden,” used as the subject of the first sentence and a vocative addressed to Chloe (1.27.2), as well as the pine garland that both girls wear (cf. 1.23.3) and the musical skill that they share.²⁰ But beyond these hints at a similarity of the two girls, whose actual extent is difficult to determine, a broader and more fundamental theme is addressed here, namely the relationship between music and myth. What is at stake is the tension between the semantical openness of musical sounds and the production of meaning through myths that claim to expound these very sounds. Within the tale, the uncanny ability of music to impart a message independently from the use of language is alluded to in the motif of the musicians vying for an audience of animals—the girl’s cows. This motif recalls Orpheus, the archetypal singer who illustrates the power that music exerts over animals and the entire universe. Chloe herself appears to be struck by this power when she hears the bird’s song. But to her, the meaning of the song is obscure, and she asks for it

²⁰ See Montiglio 2012: 140; Lalanne 2006: 142; Bowie 2003: 366; Hunter 1997: 19; MacQueen 1990: 32; Chalk 1960: 40.

to be spelled out in words.

A similar tension between music and myth can be witnessed in the novel's third episode involving an inset tale. In Book 3, Chloe hears allegedly for the first time the sound of the echo and is startled by it. She turns to Daphnis to enquire how this sound is generated, which multiplies the singing voices of sailors passing by in a boat (surely it is no coincidence, in light of the prominent role of music throughout, that the sounds that are amplified are in fact musical sounds). Daphnis, amused and delighted by the opportunity to show off his knowledge and trade it in for kisses, explains it to her by narrating the myth of the nymph Echo, who was torn to pieces by raging shepherds after she rejected Pan's love (3.23).²¹ Like in the first inset tale, several hints align Echo with Chloe: both were raised by the Nymphs, and both are musically gifted. Moreover, the parallel is foreshadowed in an earlier passage (3.11.1), where the narrator comments that Chloe answered Daphnis "like an echo," even though her words went well beyond repeating what Daphnis said.²² Echo is not a musician in other versions of the myth, notably Ovid's well-known tale of Echo and Narcissus in the *Metamorphoses* (3.356-401). These details make it abundantly clear that the tale of Echo is meant to reflect on Chloe.

The fact that here, *mythologein* is used with an internal object, *mython* (< gk > ἡρξάτο αὐτῇ μυθολογεῖν τὸν μῦθον τῆς ἠχοῦς < /gk >, 3.22.4), appears to contradict to the interpretation of this verb proposed above, for it might seem tautological "to tell a story that elucidates the story of the echo." But apart from the presence of the verb *didaskein* ("to teach," 3.22.4, cf. 3.23.5), which confirms the illustrative function the tale, there is another detail that

²¹ Morgan (2004: 215) writes that "the myth (sc. of Echo) exposes the violence and loss inherent in all sex, which the main plot ideologically conceals but which are the indispensable prelude to the creation of beauty." It should be noted, though, that there is no sex in the myth, only violence, nor is violence "indispensable" for the creation of beauty, especially when the woman who is killed is a fine musician already.

²² Montiglio 2012: 145-146; cf. Pandiri 1985: 131-132 with n. 39. For the similarity between Echo and Chloe see Montiglio 2012: 146-148; by contrast, Bowie 2003: 371 highlights their difference.

deserves attention here. After Daphnis finishes his story, the narrator adds that “the echo uttered practically the same things, as if bearing him witness that he did not lie” (3.23.5). It is easy to see that in reality, the mere occurrence of an echo offers no corroboration of Daphnis’ tale, which explained how the phenomenon of the echo was first created (as opposed to merely proving that it exists). At the same time, however, this ingenious detail serves to highlight the fact that—thanks to Daphnis’ narration—it is the echo itself that tells the story of its own creation. The narrator’s comment thus insinuates that a natural aural phenomenon, one that is infinitely flexible and variable at that, is giving an account of itself. It is an account, however, that becomes available only through the intervention of a storyteller, or interpreter.

Like in the first inset tale discussed above, there is a reminiscence of Orpheus, namely in Echo’s sparagmos. Not attested elsewhere, her dismemberment associates the nymph with the master musician, whose head according to Ovid’s account floated to the island of Lesbos, the home of Daphnis and Chloe (*Metamorphoses* 11.55). Playing on the ambiguity of the word *mele*, Longus even includes an allusion to the detail mentioned by Vergil that Orpheus’ head still sang after being severed from the rest of the body (*Georgics* 4.525-526). For after her violent death Echo’s scattered *mele*—as much her limbs as her songs—“imitate everything” (μιμείται πάντα, 3.23.4), in line with the magnificent musicality of the nymph, who played a variety of instruments and mastered “all singing” (< gk > πᾶσαν ᾠδὴν < /gk >, 3.23.2).²³

In the two episodes examined so far, music—in the form of the bird’s tune and the sailors’ songs amplified by the natural phenomenon of the echo—provides a link between the world of myth and social reality. The sounds produced by the bird and by the echo are the vehicles for stories that are projected onto the natural environment, stories that are of course man-made and

²³ The expression “all singing” at the end of a list that aptly represents the ancient hierarchy of instruments—the syrinx, the pipes, the lyre, and the kithara—probably anticipates the versatile voice of the echo.

encapsulate cultural patterns that dominate the society in which the stories circulate. Natural sounds are credited with the dissemination of these stories, which are thus made to look like an integral part of the environment inhabited by Daphnis and Chloe. In this process, the music created by animals and the natural world is, as it were, ‘socialised’. It participates in the mechanisms of acculturation that concern in particular Chloe, who is the internal audience of the music and the tales that expound it, and who mirrors the female protagonists of the tales in various ways. Although the violence of the tales seems far removed from Chloe’s world, it is nevertheless clear that the tales are especially relevant to her.

The integration of natural music into Chloe’s gradual acculturation is most blatant in the echo which, “like an instrument” (< gk > ὡς ὄργανον < /gk >, 3.21.4), imitates everything, including, as noted above, Daphnis’ tale (3.23.4-5). Imitation is generally considered an eminently human activity, shared only by primates, although the ancients thought that other animals engage in imitation too.²⁴ But here it is the physical environment itself that acquires the status of an instrument that imitates human sounds.²⁵ This role reversal of nature and culture is ultimately part of a larger scheme in which certain human behaviours and culturally determined perceptions are refashioned as natural and, hence, inevitable. It has long been seen that various characters of the novel contribute to this redefinition of what is natural. Among them are the goatherd Dorkon who, by dressing up as a wolf, disguises the sexual assault he plans on Chloe as an attack of a wild animal, and Lykainion, who describes the loss of virginity to Daphnis in terms of an enormous bloodshed and thus recasts the social norm that bans premarital sex for women as

²⁴ See, e.g., Plutarch, *Table Talk* 7.5.2, 705A, where the owl is said to let itself be caught by being tricked into imitating the dance movements of those hunting it. See Teodorsson 1996: 71-72 for parallels in Athenaeus and Aelian. For modern views on animals engaging in physical mimesis see the summary in Iacoboni 2008: 42-46. A special case is the vocal imitation of human sounds by birds.

²⁵ This inversion is noted by Hunter 1997: 19.

a natural and necessary precaution.²⁶ But in addition to these rather obvious stratagems of two cunning characters of the novel, the natural music of the wood dove and the echo, which purportedly divulge stories about male desire and violence against females, add more subtle, and for that very reason perhaps also more formidable, ways in which social hierarchies are mapped onto nature and thus passed off as necessary.

Music as performance

Close to the middle of the novel, at the end of Book 2, the most complex of the threefold series of episodes under examination is found (2.32-37). It comprises a prelude in which the herdsmen attending the festival in honour of Pan engage in some competitive bragging and bantering. This is followed by the narration of the story of Pan and Syrinx by Lamon, Daphnis' foster father. The narration occupies the time span during which Philetas, an accomplished musician, waits for his syrinx to be fetched, so that the tale is a stand-in for a musical performance. Eventually Philetas plays his instrument, whereupon Dryas (Chloe's foster father) and the pair of Daphnis and Chloe perform dances.

The celebration of the god Pan reinstates order after it had been severely disrupted by the episode of Chloe's abduction by the Methymnaians (2.20.3-2.28.2).²⁷ It was thanks to Pan's intervention that Chloe was freed from captivity, and the musical offerings to the god express gratitude for Chloe's safe return. On a different level, the elaborate character of the episode responds to the fact that unlike Daphnis' tales in Books 1 and 3, Lamon's tale does not explain a natural aural phenomenon but a cultural accomplishment, the invention of the syrinx by Pan. The tale is more than just an elucidation of pleasant sounds. It aspires to be musical itself, an aspect

²⁶ See Winkler 1990: 117-122. Significantly, Lykainion means "little she-wolf."

²⁷ Cf. Montiglio 2012: 137: "The return to order is a return to music"; Winkler 1990: 119.

which is borne out by the short and melodious cola that characterise the passage. Lamon mentions that the myth was imparted to him in the form of a song by a Sicilian goatherd, for which he paid the fee of a goat and a syrinx, “a reified version of Pan and Syrinx,” as one scholar observed (2.33.3).²⁸ These details, which evoke both Theocritus and Vergil, align the tale with bucolic poetry and song, and not surprisingly it will be greeted as “sweeter than a song” by one of the listeners (2.35.1).²⁹ The tale portrays Syrinx as a beautiful maiden (*parthenos*) who tended to her animals and was a gifted singer—once more details that mirror Chloe.³⁰ Pan, aroused but shunned by Syrinx, chased her into the marshes, where she disappeared. In his anger he slashed at the reeds and, realising that she was gone, he fashioned a syrinx assembling reeds of uneven length (2.34.1-3).

Reversing the order of music and tale that characterises the episodes in Books 1 and 3 discussed above, Philetas responds to Lamon’s narration with a solo concert on the syrinx. An experienced musician, he exhibits “the full range of skill” (< gk > πᾶσαν τέχνην < /gk >), adjusting his style *ad libitum* to animal and human audiences (2.35.4). Like the echo later in Book 3, he possesses an infinite range of possible sounds, and with his one syrinx he is able to express the sounds of “all syringes altogether” (*ibid.*).³¹ But unlike the echo, which merely reflects and amplifies the sounds it does not produce, Philetas has full command over his own music.

Philetas’ versatility sets his music apart from the tale told by Lamon, which in addition to

²⁸ Pandiri 1985: 132. On the musical qualities of the tale see Bowie 2003: 369. The musicality of Longus’ style is discussed by Hunter 1983: 84-98; Zeitlin 1990: 441; Bernardi 1992; Pattoni 2005: 142-144; Montiglio 2012: 153-155.

²⁹ The affinity with Theocr. *Id.* 1.23-60 and 128-30, Verg. *ecl.* 2.28-39, and their common model Philetas is discussed by Bowie 2003: 368; Bowie 1985: 81-82; Hunter 1983: 81.

³⁰ The parallel between Syrinx and Chloe has been noted e.g. by Montiglio 2012: 142-143; Lalanne 2006: 141-142; Bowie 2003: 369; Pandiri 1985: 131.

³¹ Hubbard 2006 reads this versatility as an image for the novel’s own virtuoso and cross-generic appropriation of a rich and diverse literary tradition.

its own musicality possesses a specific representational content. The tale with its finite meaning does not claim to expound the sounds of this instrument, which are indeed heard only after the narration.³² Vice versa, the musical sounds themselves have no connection with the story of Syrinx. Unlike the dove's song and the echo, they do not 'proclaim' a myth, not even in a veiled fashion; they are infinitely variable and cannot be pinned down to any one meaning. The only sign that remains of the story of Pan and Syrinx is the physical instrument itself with its pipes of unequal pitch, a symbol that alludes to the unequal relationship of the god and the nymph (2.34.3). By contrast, the music of the syrinx is, as it were, emancipated from the myth of its origin. It is the music of an instrument played by a human being who freely adapts its expression to a variety of situations and audiences.

It is not Philetas' music but Daphnis and Chloe's dance that harks back to the aitiological myth and makes it palpable. After a pantomime depicting various grape-harvesting scenes performed by Dryas, they jump to their feet and spontaneously take up the roles of Pan and Syrinx (2.37).³³ Again, imitation seems to be a sort of default behaviour, but the adolescents now extend it to the world of myth.³⁴ Their dance is generally taken as an important step in their acculturation. There is certainly some truth in this. But it is important to note that the reason is not that they somehow identify with the mythical characters they impersonate, as scholars have assumed.³⁵ A closer glance at the language of the passage suggests instead that they keep a safe distance between themselves and the characters. The narrator, differentiating carefully between the dancers and the characters, uses Daphnis and Chloe as the grammatical subjects throughout.

³² It is hardly a coincidence that the verb that refers to Lamon's activity as a narrator is not *mythologeîn* but simply "to tell" (<gk> ἀφηγήσασθαι </gk>, 2.33.3), although the story itself is still called a *mythos* and a *mythologema* (2.33.3, 2.35.1).

³³ Dances depicting Pan and nymphs are mentioned in Plato, *Laws* 7, 815c; Plutarch, *Table Talk* 7.8, 711EF. For a discussion of Dryas' dance see Schlapbach (forthcoming).

³⁴ Epstein 2002: 33-34.

³⁵ E.g., Hunter 1983: 54; Lalanne 2006: 142.

Words such as to “represent” (< gk > μιμῆσθαι, ἐμφαίνειν < /gk >) and “as / like” (< gk > ὡς < /gk >) dominate the page, making it clear that the two performers play act (2.37):

< gk > ὁ Δάφνις Πᾶνα ἐμμεῖτο, τὴν Σύριγγα Χλόη· ὁ μὲν ἰκέτευε πείθων, ἡ δὲ ἀμελοῦσα ἐμειδία· ὁ μὲν ἐδίωκε καὶ ἐπ’ ἄκρων τῶν ὀνύχων ἔτρεχε τὰς χηλὰς μιμούμενος, ἡ δὲ ἐνέφαινε τὴν κάμνουσαν ἐν τῇ φυγῇ· ἔπειτα Χλόη μὲν εἰς τὴν ὕλην ὥς εἰς ἔλος κρύπτεται, Δάφνις δὲ λαβὼν τὴν Φιλητᾶ σύριγγα τὴν μεγάλην ἐσύρισε γοερὸν ὡς ἐρῶν, ἐρωτικὸν ὡς πείθων, ἀνακλητικὸν ὡς ἐπιζητῶν· ὥστε ὁ Φιλητᾶς θαυμάσας φιλεῖ τε ἀναπηδήσας καὶ τὴν σύριγγα χαρίζεται φιλήσας καὶ εὐχεται καὶ Δάφνιν καταλιπεῖν αὐτὴν ὁμοίῳ διαδόχῳ. < /gk >

Daphnis took the part of Pan, Chloe of Syrinx. He pleaded imploringly, while she smiled disdainfully. He pursued and ran on tiptoe to mimic hooves, while she enacted the girl tiring in the chase. Then Chloe hid in the wood, as though in a marsh, while Daphnis took Philetas’ mighty pipes and piped a plaintive tune like one in love, an amorous tune like one paying court, a tune of recall like one seeking and not finding. In admiration, Philetas leapt to his feet and kissed him, and having kissed him made him a present of the pipes and prayed that Daphnis should have so good a successor to leave them to (trans. Morgan 2004).

In this charming ballet the violence of the myth is suppressed. Pan is merely pleading, Syrinx simply does not care and smiles, and Pan’s rage and his cutting of the reeds are omitted.³⁶ Like children pronouncing words they don’t understand, they perform or hint at actions whose real significance escapes them.³⁷ But although various details are missing, the re-enactment nevertheless follows the plot through. Chloe disappears into the wood while Daphnis proceeds to play on Philetas’ syrinx, which was earlier described as just like that syrinx that Pan first made (2.35.2).³⁸ In this way the music of the syrinx, audible in the here and now of the festival, becomes part of the myth of its origin, from which it is otherwise dissociated.

So, when it comes to man-made music a more elaborate strategy is needed to reinstate a

³⁶ See Winkler 1990: 119-120; Bowie 2003: 369-370; Epstein 2002: 34; on Chloe showing “neglect” (< gk > ἀμελοῦσα < /gk >), which is a recurrent motif in the novel, see Bowie 2005b: 80-81.

³⁷ See Winkler 1990: 120.

³⁸ The presumed transformation of Chloe into a syrinx is anticipated at 1.14.3, where Chloe wishes to be Daphnis’ syrinx, and 1.24.4, where Daphnis kisses Chloe’s lips via the proxy of the instrument (see above, p. 5*). See Maritz 1991: 63; Montiglio 2012: 141.

link between the music and its story of origin. Unlike in the first tale and later in the third, it is not possible simply to claim that the music itself pronounces the story of its genesis. Instead, the music's association with its aitiological myth hinges on the physical aspect of the musical performance. Just how the music and the myth interact in the festival context deserves a closer look.

It is striking that the moment Daphnis picks up the syrinx and starts playing music, he no longer pretends. While in their ballet Daphnis and Chloe are quite obviously play acting, now Daphnis no longer needs to feign. Unlike so many opera stars who simulate playing the mandolin on stage while serenading, Daphnis really masters his instrument. In his musical performance, the myth and the re-enactment become finally one. The moment Daphnis no longer pretends but acts fully as himself coincides with the myth's greatest authenticity and persuasiveness. Daphnis now plays no less as himself than as Pan, and it is through his solo concert that the image of male dominance and imperiousness that the myth encapsulates becomes most real and palpable.³⁹

A further observation highlights the crucial role of the musical performance. For the duration of his concert Daphnis is physically separated from his beloved Chloe, just long enough to get an inkling of what an actual separation would mean for him. When she is finally back, he “kissed Chloe as if he had recovered her after a real flight” (< gk > φιλήσας ὥς ἐκ φυγῆς ἀληθινῆς εὐρεθείσαν τὴν Χλόην < /gk >, 2.38.1). All of a sudden the experience of something *as if* it were real but is not, which previously characterised the dance, is transported into Daphnis' life beyond the spectacle and provides an emotional thrill which the dance alone was hardly able to give. It is not the simulated reenactment itself that provokes such strong emotions, but the momentary separation of the two adolescents in the here and now of the festival. And it is no

³⁹ Deligiorgis (1974: 3) notes that the reenactment “affirms Pan's musical characteristics that (Daphnis) possesses.”

doubt because Daphnis was absorbed in his music that he temporarily forgot that Chloe was not far away and was only pretending anyway. So, the unity of myth and reenactment in Daphnis' instrumental performance means that the emotions of the myth end up affecting the youth in his real life. It is through his musical mastery that Daphnis comes after all close to Pan.

So, there is no physical violence, no pursuing and no threatening in Daphnis' impersonation of Pan, and an important dimension of the god's being remains therefore foreign to the youth. However, the music allows him to experience a temporary feeling of loss, which aligns him with the god. In addition, it should not be overlooked that his position as a solo musician is a singularly powerful one. Not only is he at the centre of everybody's attention. More importantly, he also assumes full control over the sounds he produces. He modulates them to express a variety of amorous feelings, sounding now "like one in love," now "like one paying court," now "like one seeking and not finding" (2.37.3). The music itself is thus also a way of exploring and experiencing certain emotions that are part of the myth of Pan, if in the characteristic mode of—now musical—mimesis, indicated by the repeated use of the word < gk > ὡς < /gk > ("like"). But if the music is mimetic, by contrast, the act itself of performing it is completely real. Daphnis, being an authentic musician, is free to infuse the music with the expression he chooses. In his musical performance, greatest flexibility and greatest control over musical expression converge. His musical mastery rests on the capacity for accomplished mimesis—now not just of natural sounds such as a bird's song, but of emotions, states of mind, even actions. While the tune produced by the bird in the first episode or the sounds reflected by the echo in the third are rigid and limited in their expression, Daphnis' music is variegated, and his power to shape it the way he wants is real.

In this complex spectacle, the fictional frame of the ballet links Daphnis' music to the

story of its origin. On its own, the music of the syrinx shows no trace of its past; the amorous modes played by Daphnis are not sufficient in themselves to evoke Pan's encounter with the nymph Syrinx. But within the fictional setting of the physical re-enactment, it is the musical performance that allows the myth to turn into reality, at least to a certain extent. Thanks to his musical prowess, Daphnis assumes the role of a solo star, which assures him predominance not only on the makeshift rural stage but also beyond the performance itself. Indeed, his achievement is publicly acknowledged by Philetas, who rewards Daphnis with the gift of the syrinx on which he played.⁴⁰

The spectacle thus serves to highlight the ambivalent nature of musical (instrumental) performance, which belongs as much to the actual situation of the festival as to the fiction of the myth. It straddles representation and reality without using words or dance. This sets it apart from the more familiar phenomenon known as choral projection, typical of tragic choral odes of the latter part of the fifth century, which has received far more scholarly attention.⁴¹ Choral projection, in which the dancing of the dramatic chorus in the here-and-now mirrors that of another, mythical or astral chorus, rests ultimately on the words of the choral song. It is through the song that the presence of another chorus is evoked whose movements blend in with those of the dramatic chorus. If choral projection is a dramatic technique that dissolves the boundaries between myth and reality, it is so largely thanks to the use of language.

By contrast, in Longus' episode words and dance merely set the stage for Daphnis' subsequent musical performance as Pan. Once this frame of reference is established, the musical performance marks the moment in which the spectacle goes beyond the fictional framework of

⁴⁰ As in Verg. *eccl.* 2.31-39, the syrinx replaces the staff, the traditional symbol for the transmission of power in the bucolic world (e.g., Theocr. *Id.* 7.128-129; see Hubbard 2006: 103).

⁴¹ The influential concept of choral projection has been introduced by Henrichs 1994-95.

the myth and introduces the mythical pattern of male predominance into the rural world inhabited by Daphnis and Chloe. Not only does Daphnis play both as himself and as Pan, he also plays as much for Chloe as for Syrinx, Pan's beloved. More correctly, he plays for the whole audience which, ironically, also includes the very god, Pan, who is being honoured by the celebration. So, the music Daphnis produces is flexible and multilayered not only in its expressions but also as a performance. For as sound it is mimetic, but as a performance it is at once mimetic and real: mimetic, because Daphnis impersonates Pan; real, because he is a version of Pan in his own right, at least in terms of musical prowess. In the here and now of his musical performance, Daphnis realises a share of the visual and musical predominance that the myth accords Pan over Syrinx.

All three episodes, then, align music with myths that claim to elucidate its meaning or, in the case of the syrinx whose expressive range is quite unlimited, to explain where it comes from. But while in the episodes involving the bird and the echo, the myths alone produce transparent meanings, in the episode on the syrinx the ability to produce variable meanings is also subsumed into the music. At the same time, as a performance the music is rooted in the actual festival context. It becomes clear that both as a storyteller and a musician, Daphnis grounds the meaning of the myths in the social reality through his performances. He does not just communicate tales of male predominance, he performs male predominance by the very act of being the one talking and playing music. As a storyteller, he establishes an unequal relationship between himself and Chloe by assuming the role of a teacher and leaving to her the role of listener and pupil.⁴² And as a musician he takes centre stage not only in relation to Chloe but also to his peers and elders, displaying his aptitude at modulating the tunes he plays. Either way he is the one who puts meanings on sounds. Presumably he feels entitled to do so not just because he is two years older

⁴² Scholars have remarked on this disparity in the third episode (Winkler 1990: 121; Hunter 1997: 19; Morgan 2004: 214-215; Montiglio 2012: 146). But it should be noted that it is there even in Book 1.

than Chloe, or because the very myths that circulate predestine him to this prominent role. Rather, it is also because those who perform the same role in his environment are predominantly male, such as Lamon telling the story of Pan and Syrinx or Philetas playing the syrinx. Not surprisingly, they are also the ones who publicly sanction his activity as an interpreter.⁴³

Only in his dance performance is Daphnis less assertive and does not really fill out the character he is playing—too fine, perhaps, is the line that separates the theatrical dimension from the surrounding situation. There needs to be the buffer zone of pretence and abridgement between the two adolescents and the mythical characters they impersonate. But while it is not admissible for Daphnis to assume Pan's role in all respects, he is free to play the syrinx just like Pan. Music is the domain that allows him fully to embody his role model.

Musical appropriations

Daphnis' assimilation to Pan through music does not mean that music should be understood as a contained and culturally refined expression of an underlying sexual drive prone to physical violence, as symbolised by Pan. The problem with such a reading is that in line with the embedded myths of Longus' novel, such an underlying drive is essentially conceived of as male, with the corollary that its 'sublimated' version, art, would likewise have to be imagined as an essentially male affair. But the novel undermines an interpretation along these lines by depicting both Daphnis and Chloe as spontaneously imitating the songbirds and gamboling animals, not to mention Chloe's powerful performance on the syrinx that saves Daphnis' life (1.29) and the three accomplished female musicians of the embedded myths themselves. The

⁴³ Lykainion, who teaches Daphnis how to have intercourse (3.15-19), stands out as a female teacher, but it is not a coincidence that she takes care to instruct Daphnis surreptitiously: her role—crucial for the advancement of the plot—gets no recognition in the society she lives in.

novel depicts a world in which art or artistic activity do by no means have to overcome a primeval state of crude force or violence.⁴⁴ It is important to realise that what is at stake in the novel's depiction of music is not an abstract notion like the nature of art. This is evident even in the fact that the category of music clearly includes natural phenomena, such as a bird's tune, which is perceived as musical—and hence expressive—by virtue of its sheer beauty.⁴⁵ Instead, the question is who gets to control music, which is a very different question. It does not concern the nature of music but its uses.

In this perspective, music is nothing but a resource in the struggle for social prominence, just as stories are. As Montiglio (2012) has shown, in the patriarchal society of Longus' Lesbos, men are firmly in control of this resource. It is a society that transmits myths in which the musicality of women is curtailed and musical women are transformed into enigmatic aural phenomena or musical objects that need to be interpreted—by men. Following the lead of his elders, Daphnis tells stories and plays music in public, and in so doing he asserts his interpretive agency.

But interestingly, although the novel is unapologetic about Daphnis taking centre stage in the society he lives in, it also contains various instances of agency seeking to camouflage itself. As noted above, Dorkon wants to disappear behind a wolf's skin and Lykainion invents natural obstacles to intercourse; and the myths of the wood dove and the echo are allegedly declared by the bird and the echo themselves. Neither Dorkon nor Lykainion nor Daphnis as a storyteller are prepared to take full ownership of what they do or say. Instead they follow different strategies to

⁴⁴ For a critique of the opposite view see above, n. *21. Regarding the supposed male connotation of sexual appetite, it should be noted that Chloe is the first to fall in love (1.13), despite the fact that she is two years younger than Daphnis. For a discussion see Winkler 1990: 114-116; Daude 1991: 211-214.

⁴⁵ On the continuity of natural and human music see above, at n. 9*. The beauty of the bird's tune is implied in the fact that it "delights" Daphnis and Chloe (1.27.1: < gk > ἔτερπεν αὐτούς < /gk >); its beauty arouses admiration and the desire to understand (just like the beauty of the painting in praef. 1, described as < gk > κάλλιστον < /gk > and < gk > τερπνότερα < /gk >). Not all music is pleasant, though: Pan's music is frightening at 2.26.3.

sign over responsibility for their words and deeds to nature.

In appealing to nature's authority these characters coopt nature into the process of defining culture, but this process clearly ends up encroaching on nature. The blatant contradiction that emerges from relying on nature on the one hand but manipulating it on the other affects the overall understanding of the novel: the fact that evidently arbitrary interpretations and appropriations of nature masquerade as natural and, hence, inevitable, draws attention to a gap in the legitimacy of culture and invites careful scrutiny of the legitimising strategies. Rather than condoning the ways in which culture imposes itself on nature, the novel opens up a space for the reader to question them, because showing the discrepancy between nature and culture means exposing culture *as culture*, that is, an arbitrary system of values and acquired behaviours.

In this connection it is finally worth noting that the climax of the threefold series of inset tales is constituted by the tale of Echo, rather than that on the invention of the syrinx, as one might expect if presupposing a general framework of a progression from nature to culture. But although Daphnis and Chloe's path towards marriage can be described as a process of acculturation and thus corresponds to such a framework, the sequence of the three tales arguably complicates the picture. One might speculate whether it culminates in the tale of Echo precisely because the echo is a natural phenomenon and thus reinforces the tendency of the novel to conceal human agency and to confound nature and culture. The echo's universal and all-embracing character puts this aural phenomenon above any human musician, and its evident lack of agency is glossed over in Daphnis' manipulation of the sounds it produces as he explains its origin to Chloe. His story, as we saw, is as much a story told by the echo (or Echo) as one about it (or her), an ambiguity that is borne out even in the simple phrase that first introduces the narration, "he began to expound to her the story of the echo" (< gk > ἤρξατο αὐτῇ μυθολογεῖν

τὸν μῦθον τῆς ἡχοῦς < /gk >, 3.22.4). For the genitive in this phrase can be understood both as subjective and objective; the echo is both an agent and an object. The idea of a natural entity as a vocal agent harks back not only to the wood dove of the first inset tale but finds confirmation also in another passage from Book 1, where musical craftsmanship is attributed to rivers and the wind: “One would think that the rivers were singing softly as they flowed and the winds were piping as they blew through the pine trees” (1.23.2).⁴⁶ The ekphrastic formula, “one would think” (< gk > εἴλασεν ἄν τις < /gk >), which normally makes absent objects present or animates the static representations of a work of art, is here used to humanise the natural environment, and it will hardly remind the reader that the transformation of rivers and winds into animated beings playing music hinges in fact on his or her own imagination.

So, the novel seeks in various ways to minimise the impression that music is an eminently human pursuit. In this way another, crucial issue is blurred too, namely, who gets to play, and who gets to determine what musical sounds mean. Instead we seem to be surrounded by a sonorous universe that all but discloses its own meaning. Similarly, the narrator’s claim that all he does is to recount someone else’s interpretation of a painting—incidentally a painting that merely represents “games played by shepherds” (< gk > ποιμένων παίγνια < /gk >, 4.40.3)—relegates responsibility for the events he recounts to multiple other instances.⁴⁷ This reluctance to take ownership of the narration is encapsulated most succinctly in the formula that describes the painting’s subject matter, “a history of love” (< gk > ἱστορίαν ἔρωτος < /gk >, praef. 1), which, again, means both a history about love (or Love), and a history authored *by Love*—whether

⁴⁶ See Bowie 2005b: 75-78.

⁴⁷ This is the phrase that summarises the entire plot up to the wedding night, i.e. the very events that are depicted in the painting. The literary connotations of *paignion* support the reading proposed here. The characteristic ambivalence of the genitive—games by shepherds or (literary) games about shepherds—is noted, e.g., by Hunter 1983: 50; Herrmann 2007: 223-224. For the narrator’s camouflage in the preface see Hunter 1983: 46-47; Winkler 1990: 106; Wouters 1994: 138-139; Hunter 1997: 27-28.

understood as a god or the natural force of desire itself.

This blatant endeavour of the novel to mask its own authority finds a parallel in Book 2, when Pan announces that Eros will transform Chloe into a myth (2.27.2: < gk > ἐξ ἧς Ἔρωσ μῦθον ποιῆσαι θέλει < /gk >). She is thus aligned with the cowgirl, Syrinx, and Echo, who are equally transformed into myths through the workings of eros. If, more precisely, their metamorphosis into the wood dove, the syrinx, the echo is the subject of the myths about them, it is easy to see that the element in the main plot that corresponds to this particular moment is the transformation of Daphnis and Chloe's story into a painting, namely the one mentioned in the preface, which is the very model on which the story of Daphnis and Chloe is based. Although we are not told so explicitly, it is fair to assume that this painting is among the offerings to the Nymphs made by Daphnis and Chloe after their marriage (4.39.2).⁴⁸ The painting is thus the immediate outcome of Daphnis and Chloe's story. It proclaims the stages of their romance, just as the wood dove's song purportedly proclaims the girl's misfortune, and its meaning is spelled out by an expert (< gk > ἐξηγητήν < /gk >, praef. 3), just as the story of Syrinx is transmitted by experts.⁴⁹

But if the novel presents itself as a myth that elucidates an enigmatic painting just as the inset tales expound sounds, it clearly also wants to be understood as a musical phenomenon, like the musical tale of Pan and Syrinx in Book 2. It thus combines the finiteness of a story with the

⁴⁸ Hunter 1983: 42-43; Wouters 1989-90: 476-477; Zeitlin 1990: 443. The absence of an inset tale in Book 4 has been variously explained. MacQueen 1990: 86 identifies the missing "aition of Chloe" in the episode involving Lampis (4.28-29), but he neglects the fact that the inset tales are not aitia of the girl, Syrinx, or Echo, but of the bird, the syrinx, and the echo. Bowie 2003: 375-376 suggests that Book 4 (especially the marriage of Daphnis and Chloe) encapsulates the myth announced in 2.27.2, which is spread out over 4 Books. Pandiri 1985: 133 reads the destruction of Dionysophanes' garden as a parallel and otherwise anticipates Bowie 2003. All of them overlook the role of the painting for the "myth of Chloe."

⁴⁹ The expert or interpreter mentioned in the preface puts another layer between the narrator and his characters, in addition to the painting itself; see Hunter 1997: 28; Wouters 1994: 138-139; Maeder 1991: 16; Winkler 1990: 106; Hunter 1983: 46-47. Konstan 1998: 14 notes how the model of the work is given by that very work, creating in reality a complete "referential autonomy".

characteristic semantic openness of music. In addition, it also strives to do justice to the visual beauty of the painting in a mimesis through words, which responds to the desire “to match the painting in writing” (< gk > ἀντιγράφει τῇ γραφῇ < /gk >, praef. 3). It is a beautiful musical tale that sets the painting into motion, just as the dance scene at the end of Book 2 brings together a tale, music and drama. The painting, however, is all but forgotten for the most part of the novel, and the novel seems to be composed as an end in itself rather than to elucidate a work of art. Similarly, Daphnis usurps the stage set for Pan and ultimately plays as—and for—himself. Artistic mastery is born from interpretation but goes past it.

But while the novel’s endeavour to disavow its own creativeness is prominently placed in the opening paragraph and can hardly be overlooked, Daphnis’ interpretive manipulations of natural musical sounds have largely escaped notice. However, the narrator’s elaborate camouflage in the preface invites us to pay all the closer attention to the strategies that legitimise male control over music by passing it off as natural. If we readily acknowledge the narrator’s literary conceit at the beginning, surely we should concede the novel a similar self-awareness throughout, as it uncovers the gaps between an infinitely rich sound universe shared by humans, animals, and the natural environment, and the limited—and limiting—meanings that are applied to it through stories.⁵⁰

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